

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

The claims are 1-7, 9, 11-16, 18 and 20. Claim 1 has been amended to incorporate the subject matter of claims 17 and 19. Accordingly, claims 17 and 19 have been canceled, and claims 18 and 20, which previously depended on claims 17 and 19, respectively, have been amended to depend on claim 1. These claims, and claims 5-7, 9, 11, and 13-15, have also been amended to improve their form. In addition, claims 8 and 10 have been canceled. Reconsideration is expressly requested.

The drawings were objected to as failing to depict the arrangements shown in claims 8 and 10. In response, without conceding the propriety of this objection and in order to expedite prosecution, Applicants have canceled claims 8 and 10, thereby obviating the Examiner's objection to the drawings on this basis.

Claims 5-8 and 15-17 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for the reasons set forth on page 2

of the Office Action. In response, Applicants have canceled claims 8 and 17 and have amended claims 5-7 and 15 to improve their form. It is respectfully submitted that all currently pending claims comply with 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, and Applicants respectfully request that the rejection on that basis be withdrawn.

Claims 1-20 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by or, in the alternative, under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as obvious over *Lapeyre et al.* U.S. Patent No. 6,367,616 for the reasons set forth on pages 3-4 of the Office Action.

In response, Applicants have amended claim 1 to incorporate the subject matter of claims 17 and 19 and respectfully traverse the Examiner's rejection for the following reasons.

As set forth in claim 1 as amended, Applicants' invention provides a conveyor belt having a bearing side and a backing side made of elastomer material, as well as an embedded reinforcement carrier. The backing side is reinforced with ball-type elements,

with each ball-type element having a diameter of 1-5 mm. The elastomer density of each ball-type element reinforcement is 1.0 to 2.0 g/cm³. In this way, Applicants' invention provides a conveyor belt having an improved indentation rolling resistance which therefore results in a lower demand for energy.

Contrary to the Examiner's position, it is respectfully submitted that *Lapeyre et al.* fails to disclose or suggest a conveyor belt having a bearing side and a backing side made of elastomer material, as well as an embedded reinforcement carrier. In addition, the backing side of *Lapeyre et al.* is not reinforced with ball-type elements as recited in Applicants' claim 1 as amended. Rather, *Lapeyre et al.* discloses a "modular roller-top conveyor belt" made of metallic construction parts. In this type of belt, it is essential that there exist rolling elements (for example, as shown in FIG. 4 and FIG. 7 of *Lapeyre et al.*).

In contrast, the ball-type elements of the backing side of the conveyor belt of Applicants' conveyor belt, as recited in claim 1 as amended, do not roll. The reinforcement ball-type elements

embedded in the elastomer matrix add to dampening. Therefore, the backing side reinforced with ball-type elements is also called a damping ball mat. See Applicants' disclosure at page 2, fourth paragraph.

Moreover, as recited in Applicants' claim 1 as amended, the elastomer density of the ball reinforcement is 1.0 to 2.0 g/cm³, which further distinguishes claim 1 as amended from Lapeyre et al.

Accordingly, it is respectfully submitted that the claims are patentable over the cited references.

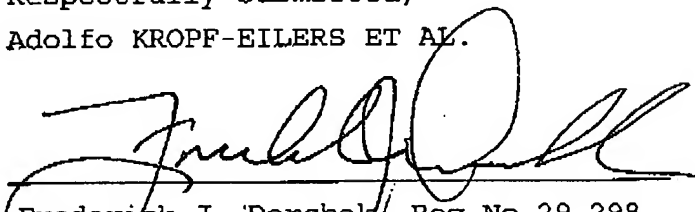
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In summary, claims 1, 5-7, 9, 11, 13-15, 18 and 20 have been amended, and claims 8, 10, 17 and 19 have been canceled. In view of the foregoing, it is respectfully requested that the claims be allowed and that this application be passed to issue.

Respectfully submitted,
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Enclosures: Supplemental Information Disclosure Statement with PTO
Form 1449

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